



*The Christopher Hotel's Bruno Benedetti (left) and Le Tony's Maxime Deschamps are among the chefs preparing French regional menus for the festival.*

representatives of Chateau Smith Haut Lafite, Cuvée Prestige, Champagne de Venoge, Bollinger, and Chateau St. Georges, among others, also conducted daily wine tastings in the capital of Gustavia.

At a festive luncheon overlooking the water at the **Christopher Hotel**, chef **Bruno Benedetti** paired Laurent Perrier Champagnes with fillet of marade in an orange beurre blanc, sautéed magret of duck with turnip confit, and the Champagne region's famous Chaource cheese. The fizz from lunch had barely subsided when a Dentz Champagne dinner rolled around at the elegant colonial Frantzou Plantation. Dishes included local crayfish in a Champagne sauce, pork tenderloin with Champagne, and a blood orange salmon gratinée.

Other dinners celebrated the foods and wines of Bordeaux, Provence, Alsace, the Loire, and so on. And as the festivities drew to an end, the organizers were already enthusiastically planning a second annual dining marathon.

"The festival definitely increased our lunch and dinner business," says Christopher Hotel general manager **Joël Fenoyer**. "Usually, we don't have so many guests from outside the hotel. We only have 40 small hotels, so many visitors rent private villas and have the choice of eating at home; the festival seemed to bring them out. But I don't think it was famous enough yet to bring new tourists to the island. Hopefully, it will in the future."

The chic island tends to be fully booked during high season, December 15 to April 15. But there's a growing market for shoulder season and summer business that promoting the island as a dining destination can only help.

For information about next year's Festival Gastronomique, treatments scheduled for mid April, call The Clement Petrosik Co.: (212) 593-1805.

—BETTER STEPHEN

## FRONT BURNER

### MORE DISH

up all over Beverly Hills. No matter what Pack take-side to move **Spago** to the site formerly occupied by the **Bistro Guyden**, extensive renovations are expected to take at least eight months before the move can take place; that he took over the 232 N. Beverly Drive space to launch his new upscale but casual Asian concept **OhaiChino**, scheduled for August with a second unit to follow in Seattle in fall. Plans are also in the works to open a **Chinois** in Las Vegas late next year. Pack visits and parties **Barbara Laramie**, recently spent three weeks in Asia buying art for the **OhaiChino** units and the new **Chinois**. • **William Tremont**, opening executive chef at **Pangaea** in the **Hotel Nikko** at Beverly Hills from early '92 to '95, returned to his executive chef post in late April. ■

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